

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3138

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DEPARTMENT PASS TREASURY FOR SECRETARY SHULTZ

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR VE FR ENRG

SUBJECT: FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT TO VENEZUELA

1. FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT ARRIVED IN CARACAS EARLY MARCH 25 TO PRESIDE OVER WESTERN HEMISPHERE FRENCH CHIEFS OF MISSION MEETING (FIRST SUCH REGIONAL MEETING EVER HELD) WHICH CONCLUDES MARCH 28. IN A CROWDED DAY JOBERT MET WITH VENEZUELAN FOREIGN MINISTER SCHACHT PRIVATELY FOR ABOUT FIFTEEN MINUTES AND WAS GUEST OF HONOR AT LUNCHEON GIVEN BY SCHACHT AND LATER WAS RECEIVED BY PRESIDENT PEREZ. JOBERT ALSO LAID THE CUSTOMARY WREATH AT THE NATIONAL PANTHEON AND, PRESUMABLY TO EMPHASIZE FRANCE'S DEVOTION TO LEARNING, VISITED THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS AND THE TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTE.

2. JOBERT WAS QUOTED IN THE PRESS AS HAVING STATED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE CARACAS MEETING OF THE 22 FRENCH CHIEFS OF MISSION IS TO MAKE FRANCE'S PRESENCE MORE FELT IN LATIN AMERICA." HE STATED THAT PRESIDENT POMPIDOU HAS NO INTENTION OF RESIGNING, AND EVADED RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ABOUT U.S.-FRENCH RELATIONS.

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3. ASKED ABOUT PETROLEUM, JOBERT REPORTEDLY SAID, "AT THE MOMENT WE

HAVE NO SUPPLY PROBLEMS, BUT WE ARE SEARCHING IN TWO DIRECTIONS: PRIVATE AND STATE, FOR LONG-TERM SUPPLY. THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT HAS VERY SMALL QUANTITIES OF PETROLEUM WHICH IT CAN DISPOSE OF DIRECTLY. SO IF WE TALK ABOUT THIS MATTER IT WILL BE RATHER THEORETICAL. EVERYTHING WE WILL TALK ABOUT WILL BE MATTERS FOR THE MEDIUM AND LONG TERM. NEVERTHELESS, WHAT IS ESSENTIAL IS TO MAINTAIN CONTACT SO WE CAN TALK AND MAKE PROGRESS." ASKED ABOUT THE ORINOCO PETROLEUM BELT, JOBERT REPLIED THAT "OUR NATIONAL OIL COMPANY HAS COME HERE TO STUDY THIS MATTER, AND I BELIEVE THAT IT IS NOW READY TO MAKE PROPOSALS IN THE EVENT POSSIBILITIES FOR EXPLOITATION EXIST. BUT I REPEAT THAT ALL THESE THINGS CANNOT BE CARRIED OUT IN A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME."

4. JOBERT WAS ALSO QUOTED AS STATING THAT "FRANCE WANTS A POLICY OF EQUALITY BETWEEN THE PRODUCING AND CONSUMING COUNTRIES, WITHOUT AFFECTING SUPPLEMENTARY TENSIONS."

5. COMMENT: JOBERT VISIT HAS STIRRED LOCAL INTEREST, BUT LOCAL PRESS PLAY SO FAR IS NOT VERY EXTENSIVE.
MCCLINTOCK

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